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Euro-American Department of Global  
Tourism



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## Basic Introduction

Kodaikanal is located in Tamil Nadu, the southernmost state of India. It is located in the Dindigul District and is centred in a portion of the Western Ghats known as the Palani Hills.

The name Kodaikanal means gift of the forest but is most often referred to in English as the Princess of the Hill Stations as Kodaikanal's beauty and allure attracts people from around the world.



At an elevation of around 7,200 feet above sea level (or 2,300 meters) Kodaikanal offers a unique environment and ecosystem which is quiet distinguishable from other regions of southern India which are typically more tropical and geographically flat.

In the summer time, when Kodaikanal is most populated, the average temperature in Kodaikanal is around 19 degrees C or 67 degrees F. By the winter time the temperature drops hitting an average temperature of around 8 degrees C or 46 degrees F. Because of these temperature differences most people visit Kodaikanal in the months of March-September.

Though there are many names ascribed to this enchanting natural sanctuary, gift of the forest best describes the beauty that makes kodaikanal so alluring. With cascading waterfalls, beckoning rivers, thick forests, and gaping valleys Kodaikanal is a pearl for explore the natural wonders of southern India.

## Accommodations and Lodging

A number of different accommodation options are available to tourists visiting Kodaikanal. Although the majority of available facilities for lodging are hotels or resorts there are also cottages, private villas, homestays, and tenting available to visiting guests.

Some hotels can be pre-booked online while others are reserved only upon arrival. In general, the more luxurious the hotel the easier it is for people to book their reservations in advance.





Yet many prefer to have a more unique experience while staying in Kodaikanal, and because of this there are many novel forms of accommodations available including private guesthouses and luxurious apartments though these types of accommodations are much fewer in number and availability. A few sites also offering tenting and luxury tents are also available for families and larger groups.

Because of the size of the city, a person searching for accommodations has a number of options available to them. Some facilities are available in the epicentre of the city providing easy access to different sites and attractions in and around Kodaikanal. Other accommodations are further removed from the city which provides its guests with more peace, privacy, and scenery.

To make the most out of your journey to Kodaikanal it is advisable to plan your accommodations in advance so that you can ensure the quality and compatibility of the place you will be staying while in Kodaikanal. If you are looking for peace and relaxation finding a more private atmosphere will enhance your time in Kodaikanal.

## Reaching Kodaikanal

At present only two means of transportation are available for arriving in Kodaikanal: bus and train. Though in the near future a helicopter service is expected to be available, at present only ground transportation is available.

Kodaikanal is located in the Dindigul District of Tamil Nadu, southern India. The nearest major city is Madurai which is approximately 135 km from the Kodaikanal city or 84 miles.

This city can be reached by train, bus, taxi, or domestic flight.

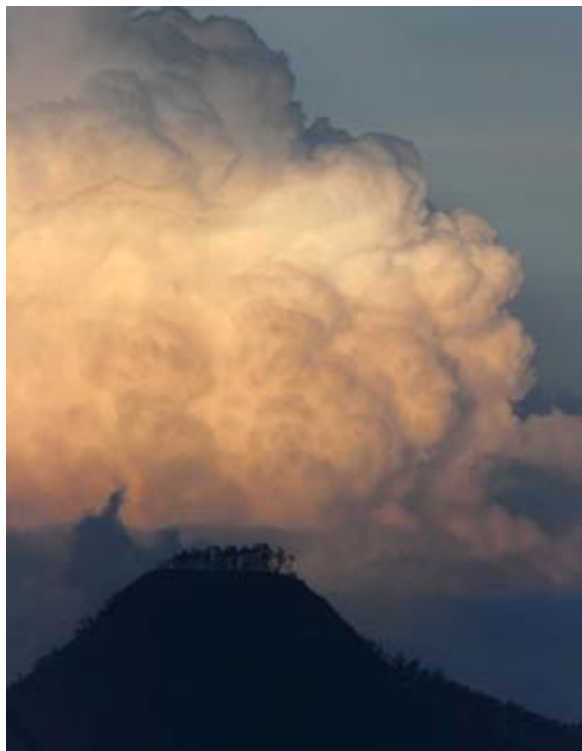


The second nearest city is Coimbatore which is 170 km or 110 miles from Kodaikanal. Another major city, Tiruchirappalli, is 200 km or 120 miles away from Kodai. Both of these cities can be reached by both domestic and international flights as well as buses, trains, and taxis.

There are two nearby train stations which arrive at the base of the Kodaikanal mountains and require only a 1 hour taxi or bus ride to reach Kodaikanal. These are the Palani Railway Station about 64 km or 40 miles from Kodaikanal and the Kodai Road Station 80 kilometres or 50 miles from Kodaikanal. Either of these can be reached by train services provided throughout India.



## Attractions & Places in Kodaikanal



The beauty of Kodaikanal is formed around the natural wilderness which was the initial attraction for the establishment of a city in the Palani Hills. Though Kodaikanal has a prehistoric past, most of what we know as Kodaikanal today is a by-product of colonialism just before the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Because of its Euro-American history Kodaikanal has a number of historic sites in and around the city including both secular and non-secular buildings and monuments. But what is the most attractive feature of Kodaikanal will always be the natural scenery that surrounds this small city.

Most of the Tourist Attractions in Kodaikanal are mainstream and easily accessible, however there are a number of off-the-map sites that

are worth exploring if you have a strong sense of adventure and exploration in your spirit.

### **Kodaikanal Lake:**

The Kodaikanal Lake was formed in 1863 and has, since then remained the most popular landmark in Kodaikanal. This lake, once a marsh area, was transformed into the 60 acre lake that is seen today. Just 500 meters from the centre of the city, the Kodaikanal lake is easily accessible and offers a number of activities and attractions for visiting guests.



The most popular activity at the lake is boating, and both rowboats and pedalos (boats with bicycle pedals for propulsion) are available for rental. Boats are available on the east side of the lake, near the Carlton Hotel at the Kodaikanal Boat Club, the north-west corner of the lake near the BSNL junction, and near Bryant Park.

Other activities include bicycle rental, shopping, walking, photography, horse rental, and more. Recently many projects have been undertaken to improve the road and its walking paths which have improved the overall quality of the lake's atmosphere and safety.

### **Bryant Park:**

On the east side of the lake sits Bryant Park, a well-maintained and manicured botanical garden that has been in existence for more than 100 years. This park, established by a forest officer from Madurai, H.D. Bryant, is a magnificent landmark with many unique varieties of plants, flowers, and other vegetation.

Bryant park is easily accessible from the city and is only a 5 minute walk from the bus stand. The park promotes over 325 varieties of flora including trees, flowers, shrubs, and cactuses some of which are rare and endangered species.



The park also has many ornamental plants including 740 varieties of roses and a large number of different orchids. The park also has plants on sale at the nursery including floral shrubs and trees, creepers, and other ornamental plants.

There is an entry fee for the Park but it is minimal.

### **Coaker's Walk**

Coaker's Walk is by far the most popular viewpoint in all of Kodaikanal. It is also highly accessible and is only 200 meters north from the Kodaikanal bus-stand. An entry fee is charged for this view point, and entry into the scenic walk is limited to operating hours. Coaker's Walk is best explored on a clear day, and if it is misty or cloudy the day you plan to visit it is best to arrange for a different day. Mornings are usually the clearest time of day as evening mist can block the view.



Coaker's Walk is named after Lt. Coaker who would walk this path daily. It is a 1km long path that has been paved with cobble stones which lines the edge of this segment of the Kodaikanal mountain known as Mount Nebo. 180 degree panoramic views of surrounding areas including Dolphin's Nose to the south, Pambar River to the southeast, and the city of Periyakulam in the plains.

Surrounding the Walk include many historical landmarks including St. Peter's Church, Van Allen Hospital, and few private residences. At the northern end of the Walk you can find an observatory which has binoculars for viewing the distant sites.

### **Bear Shola Falls**

Bear Shola Falls are waterfall located in the ticket of the forest approximately 3 km from the kodaikanal bus stand. These tall waterfalls are in the reserve forest which adds to the beauty of this natural site. The falls are near the Clifton Hotel. To get there, leave the city and head towards the telephone exchange. Take a right and head down the road which leads towards the falls.



### **Green Valley View:**

Another popular tourist attraction is Green Valley View which offers an excellent panoramic view of the plains. This viewpoint is near the Kodai Golf Course 5.5 kilometers from the city. Once called Suicide Point, Green Valley View sits at the edge of a nearly 1,500 meter cliff which overlooks the Vaigai Dam. The sight itself is very populated and includes a number of shops which line the pathway leading up to the gated viewpoint.



### **Pillar Rocks**

Pillar Rocks are part of the scenic loop and consist of three pillar-like stones, known as chimney rocks, that have formed from natural causes. The rocks are nearer to the golf course and can only be viewed from a distance. A nearby garden offers additional enjoyments for visiting guests which is maintained by the local government.





The rocks are part of the reserve forest, and the largest of the rocks stands at 122 meters in height. Though not commonly access, the rocks can be reached through a steep trek which leads to the base of the formation. Here in lies the deep chambers of the rocks which are inhabited by bats. The caves here are named Devil's Kitchen for their dark and mysterious nature. This is not a safe place for trekking with the family and is really only appropriate for experienced hikers as the caves are quiet dangerous. In fact, the caves are no longer legally accessible to the public.

### **Guna Caves:**

Guna Caves, also referred to as the Devil's Kitchen (mentioned above) were given the title after the popular Tamil film Guna feature Kama Hassan. The caves were closed after the



death of twelve young hikers who had fallen into ravens inside of the caves. Because of this high level of danger the caves are best viewed from a distance.

There is, however, upper access to the caves which is open to the public. Here tourists can walk along the openings of the caves which are covered by metal fencing. This site also offers scenic views in addition to forest trekking inside dense jungle which is a great picnic location. For families, friends, and honeymooners.

### **Pine Forest:**

The pine forest is one of the sites along the scenic loop which surround the western side of Kodaikanal. This pine forest, 10 km from the city, was established by H.D. Bryant in 1906, is a pine plantation which has now become

part of the reserve forest protected by the Indian government. The pine forest is surrounded by a fence to which guests are expected to remain within the perimeters.

### **Shembaganur Museum of Natural History:**

One of the more historical monuments in Kodaikanal is the Shembaganur Museum of Natural History which origins date back to 1895. This museum is open year round and possesses a collection of over 500 species of birds, animals, plants, insects, and other creatures that have roamed the Kodaikanal mountains.

The museum also has a collection of over 300 species of orchids which have been gathered throughout the history of the museum.





## Kodaikanal Solar Observatory

One of the only observatories for cosmic observation in southern India is the Solar Observatory which sits at the highest peak in Kodaikanal at 2,343 meters. The observatory is 6 km from the city and can be accessed via the observatory road. Because of its locations, the



observatory offers stellar solar viewing, especially on a clear night.

The observatory is selectively open to the public with scheduled tours and evening viewing during the peak tourist season. For the remainder of the year the observatory is only open to the public on Friday evenings.

The observatory is part of the Indian Institute of Astrophysics which is maintained and operated by the Indian government. One major finding is ascribed to this observatory which is the discovery of a phenomenon known as radial motion in sunspots which was discovered by the observatory's director John Evershed.

### Silver Cascade:

If you are fortunate enough to catch a glimpse of the Silver Cascade waterfall after a heavy rain the site is quite inspiring because of its power and force. The remainder of the year this location is highly populated with tourists because of its location on the main Ghat Road which leads into Kodaikanal. Still the beauty of the waterfall can be appreciated, and perhaps more enjoyable are the monkeys who surround the waterfalls who steal fruits from the vendors around the falls.



### Dolphin Nose:

Because of the challenge in reaching this point, Dolphin Nose is a quiet yet stunningly breathtaking viewpoint just outside of Kodaikanal. The viewpoint is 8 km from the city and can be reached from the Pambar Bridge. The trails is steep and rocky but well worth the adventure.



Dolphin Nose is a flat rock which jettisons out into a breathtaking chasm 6,600 feet deep. Beside this awe inspiring experience you also have a panoramic view of surrounding mountains and rocky escarpments.

From the same trail you can also access the

old Vellagavi village. Nearby you also have Pambar Falls which can be reached via a short paved walkway.

### **Kurinji Andavar Murugan Temple:**

The most popular hind temple in Kodaikanal is the Kurinji Temple 4 km south of the city. Side road which passes a well maintained botanical garden (also open to the public) leads to the Temple which sits at the top of a mountain overlooking the Elephant Valley.

The temple was built in 1936 by a European lady who had converted to Hinduism. She changed her name to Leelavathi and married Mr. Ponnambalam Ramanathan.

The temple offers wonderful views leading towards Palani. It also houses a rare flower known as the Kurinji flower which blossoms on once every 12 years.

### **Birjam Lake:**

As part of the Reserve Forest, Berijam Lake offers visitors a unique experience of Kodaikanal serene and mesmerizing nature. As opposed to some of the other lakes around Kodaikanal, the Berijam Lake is a naturally occurring lake which is fed by a number of streams which originate from the many mountains which surround the lake.



Entry into the lake is restricted by the Forest Office and those who wish to visit the lake must obtain permission from the forest office before entering the forest. A gate attended by a forest official marks the entry into the lake premises which is 12 km from the city. After entering the reserved forest an additional 8 km drive will take you to the lake.

Entry into the lake is restricted between 9.30 am to 3pm. The surrounding forests are also restricted from access and all tourists are expected to stay along the main road.

Many wild animals inhabit this forest area including bison, deer, snakes, panthers, birds, and other exotic species of plants and animals.

## **Additional Information**

To find additional information about Kodaikanal tourism, accommodations, hotels, cottages, real estate, travel tips, tourism and more please visit:

[www.aboutkodaikanal.com](http://www.aboutkodaikanal.com)

You can also contact us at: [info@aboutkodaikanal.com](mailto:info@aboutkodaikanal.com)